



# NEWS RELEASE

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## Utah Cherry Production

**Utah:** Utah's 2006 tart cherry production forecast is 28.0 million pounds, compared to 28.0 million pounds produced in 2005 and 22.0 million pounds in 2004. Utah is forecasting sweet cherry production to be 2,100 tons, up 17 percent from the 2005 crop of 1,800 tons, and a 31 percent increase from the 2004 crop of 1,600 tons. Fruit set and quality are reported to be higher than last season.

**United States:** U.S. tart cherry production is forecast at 256 million pounds, 5 percent below 2005 production but 20 percent above production in 2004. Beginning with the 2005 forecast, Colorado was discontinued from the tart cherry estimating program. Michigan, the largest producing State, expects a crop of 185 million pounds, a decrease of 11 percent from the 2005 crop but 24 percent above 2004. A severe freeze occurred May 6 in northwest Michigan while the tart cherries were mostly in late bloom. While yield potential remains high in some areas, other localities will have reduced yield. An average crop is expected in central Michigan while the crop in the southwest part of the State is very good. Washington expects to produce 21.5 million pounds of tart cherries in 2006, up 30 percent from 2005 and 23 percent more than 2004. Some problems are reported from scattered frost but overall growing conditions have been very good. If realized, this would be the second largest crop on record, surpassed only by the 26.5 million pounds produced in 2001. New York is expected to produce 9.50 million pounds, 27 percent more than the 2005 crop but 11 percent below 2004. Some winter damage and spring frost problems are reported, however the Lake Ontario and central regions of the State report a good crop. Wisconsin production is forecast at 4.50 million pounds, 40 percent below 2005 and 33 percent below the 2004 production. Rain and windy weather during the pollination period adversely affected yield potential. Pennsylvania expects to produce 4.20 million pounds of tart cherries, 62 percent above 2005 and up 40 percent from 2004. The trees wintered well and favorable weather during pollination contributed to a very good set and fruit sizing. Oregon's crop forecast of 3.00 million pounds is up significantly from last year's weather devastated crop of 0.30 million pounds but is 23 percent below the production in 2004. Ideal spring weather in most tart cherry producing areas is expected to help return production to a typical crop size after last year's record low output.

Sweet cherry production is forecast at 268,400 tons, up 7 percent from 2005 but 5 percent below 2004. Beginning with the 2005 forecast, Pennsylvania was discontinued from the sweet cherry estimating program. The Washington crop forecast of 150,000 tons is unchanged from the June Crop Production report. The crop is 9 percent above 2005 and 12 percent above the production of 2004. If realized, this will be a record high production for Washington surpassing the previous record high set last year. Eastern Washington producing areas experienced a relatively mild winter. This increased crop size is due to favorable spring growing conditions combined with increasing production from new bearing trees. Oregon production is forecast at 50,000 tons, also unchanged from the June Crop Production report. The crop is 79 percent above 2005 and 16 percent above the production of 2004. Spring conditions have been ideal for many sweet cherry producing areas throughout Oregon. Production in California is forecast at 45,000 tons, 15 percent less than last year. The California forecast is carried forward from the June 1 forecast. Excessive rain during bloom resulted in poor pollination. This, combined with a lack of chilling hours and an extreme freeze in February, created undesirable conditions for fruit set. Harvest peaked during the first 2 weeks of June. The Michigan crop is forecast at 17,000 tons, 37 percent below the 2005 production and 31 percent less than the 2004 crop. Frost caused fruit damage in many areas and fruit drop is higher than average. Idaho is expecting a sweet cherry crop of 3,200 tons, up 88 percent from last year and 3 percent above 2004. If realized, this crop would be the largest production in over a decade.

